



USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

GAIN Report

Global Agriculture Information Network

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Japan

Solid Wood Products

Japanese Housing Starts

Posting Another Growth in January 2004.

2004

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Report Highlights:

Consistent with the improving economy, housing starts increased for the first time in 3 years in 2003, with wood housing starts posting particularly strong gains. Japan's housing starts in January were up a remarkable 7.3%.

Includes PSD Changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
Unscheduled Report
Tokyo [JA1]
[JA]

Consistent with the improving economy, housing starts increased for the first time in 3 years in 2003, approximately 1% and were up 7.3% in January 2004 over the previous year. Wood building construction saw particularly strong growth in terms of both the number of units and the total floor area.

January's housing starts of 88,797 units is in part attributable to home buyers seeking to take advantage the government's tax incentive program for home loans which was extended one year from its December 2003 sunset. Other factors include depressed real estate prices and low interest rates.

The following is an update through January 2004.

Japanese Housing Starts - Update for January, 2004 (Units)				
Sector	Jan.- Dec. 2003	% Change (03/02)	January 2004	% Change (04/03)
Total Starts	1,160,083	+ 0.8%	88,797	+ 7.3%
-Custom housing	372,652	+ 1.3 %	23,671	+ 1.0%
-Rental housing	451,629	+ 0.3 %	35,038	+ 10.8%
-Corporate housing	9,163	+ 1.7 %	628	- 36.3%
-Built-for-sale	326,639	+ 0.8 %	29,460	+ 10.3%
Wood-Framed	523,732	+ 4.0 %	35,585	+ 3.6%
Wood Share (%)	45.1 %	+ 1.3 points	40.0%	- 1.5 points
By Framing Method				
-Condominiums	200,221	- 3.8 %	18,815	+ 6.0%
-Prefab. Housing (Wood-framed)	159,224 (23,204)	- 1.0% (- 2.0 %)	13,813 (2,008)	- 0.8% (+2.9%)
2x4 Wood-framed	81,502	+ 3.2%	5,900	+ 14.0%
By Floor Space (1,000 square meters)				
All Housing Starts	104,038	- 0.7 %	7,540	+ 4.9%
Wood-Framed	56,348	+ 2.6 %	3,660	+ 5.8%
Wood Share (%)	54.2%	+ 1.8 points	48.5%	+ 0.4 points

(Source: Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transportation)

End of Report.